

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MOGADI 00598 01 OF 02 212126Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----075451 212137Z /62
Z 211945Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 6017

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 0598

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY AND TARNOFF FROM MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: US, SO, PGOV
SUBJ: MEETING WITH SIAD BARRE

REFS: A) STATE 071219; B) MOGADISCIO 0593

1. I HAVE JUST COME FROM 2 HOURS WITH SIAD. HE CALLED ME OVER TWO HOURS EARLIER THAN PLANNED. HAVING NOT YET RECEIVED REPLY TO REF B, I PROCEEDED ON BASIS OF REVISED LETTER (REF A) AND PROPOSED TALKING POINTS (REF B). WE HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW LETTER. SIAD WANTS TWO CHANGES: ONE IS EASY; THE OTHER IS HARD. I TOLD SIAD I WOULD SUBMIT HIS VIEWS WITH A SUGGESTION AND THAT I WOULD

TRY TO GET BACK TO HIM TONIGHT. IF, AFTER REVIEWING THIS MESSAGE, DEPARTMENT THINKS IT CANNOT GET ME A RESPONSE WITHIN 3 HOURS, PLEASE LET ME KNOW SO THAT I CAN TELL HIM THAT I WON'T BE BACK TONIGHT. IF WE AGREE TO A REVISION, HE IS PREPARED TO CONVENE HIS COUNCIL TONIGHT SO AS TO GIVE ME AN ANSWER BEFORE MY DEPARTURE TOMORROW.

2. THE EASY CHANGE: IN PARA TWO OF REVISED LETTER SIAD WANTS
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TO REPLACE "OF ITS NEIGHBORS" WITH "OTHER COUNTRY," SO AS TO READ "AGAINST ANY OTHER COUNTRY." TO ME THIS IS STRONGER LANGUAGE ANYWAY. THE OTHER IS UNNECESSARILY POINTED. I RECOMMEND WE ACCEPT THE CHANGE.

3. THE HARD ONE: SIAD SAYS IT WILL BE "VERY HARMFUL" TO HIM TO HAVE TO SHOW HIS COUNCIL THE LETTER WITH THE PHRASE, (ALSO IN PARA

TWO OF REVISED LETTER), "EXISTING INTERNATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED."
I WENT BACK AND FORTH OVER RATIONALE CONTAINED IN PROPOSED
TALKING POINTS, POINTING OUT THAT WE HAD DONE THE MAXIMUM TO MEET HIS
OBJECTION TO EARLIER PHRASE REGARDING RESPECT "FOR TERRITORIAL
INTEGRITY OF". WHILE ACCEPTING THE VALIDITY OF MY REASONING,
SIAD FORCEFULLY INSISTED THAT INCLUSION OF PHRASE WILL BE USED
BY THOSE WHO OPPOSE HIM TO "WEAKEN US INTERNALLY." HE SAYS
THAT IF PRESIDENT IS SINCERE AND IF WE SHARE COMMON OBJECTIVES,
WE SHOULD NOT INSIST ON THIS LANGUAGE. HE ENVISAGES TAKING THE
LETTER TO HIS COUNCIL TONIGHT AND CLEARLY FEARS THAT HIS
OPPONENTS WILL SEIZE ON THE PHRASE.

4. AFTER ARGUING THE POINT AT LENGTH, I SAID THAT I WOULD CONVEY
HIS OBJECTION TO THE PRESIDENT IMMEDIATELY AND RAISED A POSSIBLE
ALTERNATIVE, MAKING CLEAR THAT I COULD NOT GUARANTEE THAT IT
WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. I SAID THAT IF WE AGREED TO DROP THE
PHRASE WE WOULD STILL HAVE TO BE IN POSITION TO ANSWER THE
QUESTION WHICH IT RAISES. THUS, IF WE ARE ASKED BY THE CONGRESS
TO DEFINE THE TERRITORIAL LIMITS OF THE SOMALI
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, WE MUST BE ABLE TO SAY THAT WE UNDERSTAND
IT TO MEAN "THE EXISTING INTERNATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED TERRITORY
OF THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC". IF WE SAY THIS, I CONTINUED,
HE MUST NOT REBUT OR DENOUNCE OUR INTERPRETATION. HE MUST
REMAIN SILENT. IF PRESSED FURTHER WE WOULD SAY THAT SIAD IS
AWARE OF OUR INTERPRETATION. I SAID THAT WE WOULD TRY TO AVOID
EITHER CLARIFICATION, BUT THAT HE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THESE
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MATTERS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO OUR CONTROL, THAT THE CONGRESS AND
PRESS ARE FULL OF LAWYERS AND THAT THE LAW IS DRAWN VERY
TIGHTLY. SIAD PROTESTED THAT A PUBLIC DEBATE ON THIS POINT WOULD BE
HARMFUL TO HIM. I TOLD HIM I HOPED WE COULD AVOID IT. IN THE
END HE ACCEPTED MY SUGGESTION.

5. COMMENT. SIAD BELIEVES HIS DECLARATIONS ABOUT NOT USING FORCE
AND USING WEAPONS ONLY FOR SELF-DEFENSE ARE ALL ENCOMPASSING.
HE WILL REGARD OUR INSISTENCE ON THE CONTROVERSIAL PHRASE AS
REVEALING THAT OUR SUPPORT FOR HIM IS TENUOUS. INSOFAR AS I
THINK I CAN READ THE MAN, I BELIEVE THAT HE IS GENUINELY
CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECT OF THE PHRASE ON HIS INTERNAL
POLITICAL POSITION. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE TO ANY OF US HERE
THAT ANY SUCCESSOR TO SIAD WOULD BE ANY LESS SENSITIVE ON THIS
POINT. BEFORE I CAME OUT HERE I HAD NO IDEA
HOW DEEP THE ATTACHMENT OF THE SOMALIS IS TO THE CAUSE OF THE
SOMALIS IN THE OGADEN. IN THE WAKE OF THEIR RECENT VAST DEFEAT,
THEY ARE SUPER SENSITIVE TO ANYTHING THAT TOUCHES ON THIS
QUESTION. THEY SEEM TO HAVE PULLED OUT WITHOUT FEELING HUMILIATED
AND AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF MAINTAINING THEIR MORALE IS TO RESIST
ANYTHING THAT CALLS ATTENTION TO THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOMALIA AND
"WESTERN SOMALIA" OR, AS WE REFER TO IT, THE OGADEN.

6. I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT LOSE SIGHT OF OUR ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE AS WE STRUGGLE TO FIND AN ACCEPTABLE LEGAL AND POLITICAL TEXT FOR THIS INITIAL AGREEMENT. IT IS CLEAR TO ME THAT SIAD IS PLACING PRIMARY EMPHASIS ON OUR WILLINGNESS TO SUPPLY ARMS AS THE CRITICAL TEST OF HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH US. I AM CONVINCED HWT HE IS WILLING TO ABIDE BY OUR RESTRICTIONS THAT MILITARY EQUIPMENT OF US ORIGIN BE USED WITHIN WHAT IS INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AS THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC. HE IS WILLING TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT CONTAINING LANGUAGE THAT ANY REASONABLE MAN WOULD CONCLUDE MEANS THAT OUR ARMS AND SUPPLIES WILL BE USED ONLY FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES. THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT ABOUT THIS OR HIS INTENTION FROM OUR DISCUSSIONS.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----076393 212303Z /62
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6018

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 0598

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY AND TARNOFF FROM MOOSE

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR TEXT

7. BY ADDING THE WORDS "EXISTING INTERNATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED" TO THE PHRASE "TERRITORY OF THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC" WE ARE ADDING POLITICAL CODE WORDS WHICH SEEM TO CREATE ENORMOUS DIFFICULTIES FOR SIAD AND DO NOT ADD GREAT AMOUNTS OF PROTECTION FOR OURSELVES. IN OTHER WORDS, THE TRADE-OFF IS A POOR ONE FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW. IF WE SEEK PROTECTION FROM SIAD'S POSSIBLE ABUSE OF OUR ARMS AND EQUIPMENT THERE IS AMPLE PROTECTION IN THE PROVISIONS OF THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT WHICH CLEARLY CAN BE APPLIED TO ANY SITUATION WHERE ARMS ARE USED IN VIOLATION OF THE STATUTE. SIAD UNDERSTANDS THIS AND SO DOES THE CONGRESS.

8. I DO NOT THINK THAT SIAD WILL SIGN A LETTER WHICH

USES THE CODE WORDS MENTIONED ABOVE. I CANNOT ESTIMATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF LEAVING MOGADISCIO WITHOUT HAVING THIS AGREEMENT IN HAND. I THINK THAT IT WILL ONLY MAKE MORE DIFFICULT THE JOB OF TRYING TO BUILD A REASONABLE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS GOVERNMENT. I WOULD NOT ADVOCATE MEETING SIAD'S CONDITION IF I FELT THAT WE WERE COMPROMISING OUR POSITION THAT ANY US SECRET

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DEFENSE EQUIPMENT BE USED ONLY FOR SELF-DEFENSE PURPOSES. I ALSO DO NOT BELIEVE THE ABSENCE OF THE WORDS "EXISTING INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED" WILL GIVE US PROBLEMS WITH THE CONGRESS. IF THE CONGRESS BALKS ON ARMS IT WILL BE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REASONS OR PERCEPTIONS THAT WE MAY BE INVOLVING OURSELVES IN A CONFRONTATION WITH CUBANS AND THE SOVIETS IN A FAR-OFF CORNER OF AFRICA. I DOUBT THAT MANY MEMBERS WILL BE CAUGHT UP IN THE JURIDICAL INTRACACIES OF THE SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN PROVISIONAL BORDER DISPUTE AND WHAT THIS MEANS.

9. I URGE STRONGLY THAT YOU PERMIT ME TO DELETE THE PHRASE I JUST MENTIONED SO THAT THE SENTENCE WOULD READ QUOTE...FOR ANY PURPOSES OTHER THAN THE INTERNAL SECURITY OR THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE OF THE TERRITORY OF THE SOMALI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC;

AND ALSO, WITH RESPECT TO ANY DEFENSE ARTICLES AND DEFENSE SERVICES SO FURNISHED THAT IT: END QUOTE. IF SIAD CAN GET HIS GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT THIS FORMULATION I BELIEVE THAT WE WILL HAVE AN INITIAL AGREEMENT WHICH IS BOTH LEGALLY CORRECT AND POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE IN BOTH THE U.S. AND SOMALIA. IT WILL BE FOLLOWED BY OTHER DISCUSSIONS, CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY AND ADMINISTRATION PUBLIC EXPLANATIONS WHICH WILL ONLY BUILD ON OUR INTERPRETATION OF THE PLAIN AND REASONABLE MEANING UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES OF SELF-DEFENSE.

10. STATE 072239 JUST RECEIVED. I MADE THE POINTS IN PARA 2. HE REPEATED HIS EARLIER REPORTED VIEWS ON KENYA AND SAYS THAT IF WE THINK ETHILPIA WILL COME BACK INTO THE FOLD WE ARE DECEIVING OURSELVES. HE SAYS HE IS IN NO POSITION TO HELP THE WSLF. AS TO PUBLICATION OF LETTERS, IF YOU APPROVE MY RECOMMENDATION I WILL TELL HIM THAT THE LETTERS MUST BE UNCLASSIFIED.

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